INFLUENCE OF SELECTED FACTORS UPON SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT CHANGES AMONG AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

By

HAROLD L. STEPHENS

Bachelor of Science

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

1986

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
December, 2001

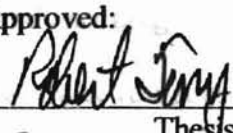
INFLUENCE OF SELECTED FACTORS UPON

SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT CHANGES

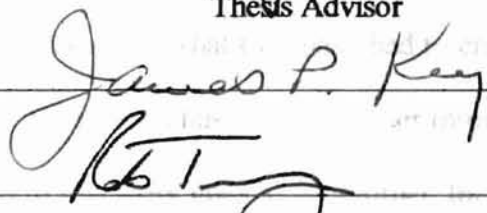
AMONG AGRICULTURAL

EDUCATION TEACHERS

Thesis Approved:



Thesis Advisor



Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to all who assisted me with this study. A special thanks to my committee chairman Dr. Robert Terry who provided support and guidance throughout my plan of study and conducting this project. I would also like to thank my other committee members Dr. James Key and Dr. Rob Terry.

I am also very thankful to Dr. James White, Dr. Jack Pritchard and Dr. Charles Cox for their motivation and encouragement throughout this project.

A very, very special thank you goes to my wife Tammi and children Timber and Ridge for their love, support, and what they have had to endure throughout this project. They have had to give up part of a husband and father throughout this study.

The dedication of this work goes to my mother, the late Bette Stephens, for it is to her that I promised I would complete this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Secondary schools in Oklahoma seem to have a rather high rate of turnover of agricultural education teachers. Information obtained from the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education indicated an average of 49.4 agricultural education teacher job changes per year in Oklahoma during a five-year period between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 2001. Within this average of 49.4 agricultural education teacher changes per year, an average of 16.4 were moves from one school to another school. Clapp (5) reported in a study covering a period of four years from July 1, 1975 to June 30, 1979 an average of 42.25 vocational agriculture teacher turnovers per year in which 24 were changes from one school to another.

The large number of agricultural education teacher job changes could prove to be very costly to many school districts throughout Oklahoma when consideration is given to the time and money spent recruiting, hiring, and helping a new teacher become established. In addition, the students, community, and administration must make an adjustment to a new teacher.

Many studies have been done to determine why agricultural education teachers leave the profession, and there have been others to determine why teachers remain, but

very few have been conducted to determine the reasons agricultural education teachers change schools.

Statement of Problem

Due to the high mobility of agricultural education teachers, some schools experience difficulty retaining teachers. Therefore, a determination of why some of these changes occur should be of benefit to a young beginning teacher selecting their first job and to school administrators for retaining teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of selected factors associated with school employment changes among agricultural education teachers in Oklahoma from July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the intent and purpose of the study, the following objectives were established.

1. To identify the number of agricultural education teachers that changed schools in Oklahoma from July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001.
2. To develop a profile of agricultural education teachers who changed schools.
3. To determine the extent of influence the following had on the decision of agricultural education teachers to change schools: Contract related factors, job location

factors, personal preference factors, community factors, administration factors, school faculty factors, facilities and equipment factors, and student factors.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the population would give an accurate description of factors that influenced agricultural education teachers to change schools. It was also assumed that the use of a questionnaire would be the best means for the population to express its opinions.

Scope of Study

The scope of the study involved the 74 agricultural education teachers in Oklahoma that changed from one school to another during the five-year period from July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions of terms were used in the study:

Agricultural education – Refers to courses of instruction taught to high school and junior high school students in the comprehensive schools designed to meet the needs of students who have entered or are preparing to enter any field requiring a knowledge of agricultural subjects. Formerly known by the term "vocational agriculture" in secondary schools.

Vocational agriculture – Refers to courses of instruction taught to high school and junior high school students in the comprehensive schools designed to meet the

knowledge of agricultural subjects. Has been replaced by the term "agricultural education" in secondary schools.

Agricultural education teachers – Refers to teachers who instruct high school and junior high school students in comprehensive schools in the study of agriculture and related fields. Formerly known by the term "vocational agriculture teachers" in secondary schools.

Vocational agricultural teachers - Refers to teachers who instruct high school and junior high school students in comprehensive schools in the study of agriculture and related fields. Has been replaced by the term "agricultural education teachers" in secondary schools.

School Changes – Refers to the employment of an agricultural education teacher and the movement directly from one school to another school.

Mobility – Refers to the movement of agricultural education teachers within and away from the field of agriculture education. Also referred to as turnover.

Turnover – Refers to the movement of agricultural education teachers within and away from the field of agriculture education. Also referred to as mobility.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature was conducted to obtain information that was useful for a questionnaire and to determine what research had previously been completed concerning mobility among agricultural education teachers. This chapter was divided into four subtitles and a summary to facilitate clarity and organization. The four subtitles are as follows: (1) Teacher Turnover, (2 Teacher Satisfaction, and (3) Teacher Retention.

Teacher Turnover

Agricultural education is believed by many to be the most demanding teaching profession. Cano (3) reported that it is not unusual for agricultural education teachers to work long hours and have more work to complete than is humanly possible. Cano also reported that successful agricultural education teachers are pressured by the students they serve and from the community to excel. Also, along with this comes pressure from the school administrators to give even more. This goes along with a point made by Thomson, Gwynn, Palmer and Eaker (31) that not only must vocational agriculture teachers consider their students, but must also consider the needs, demands, and wishes of the school board, administrators, and community.

With all of the demands placed on agricultural education teachers, it is easy to see where they might fall victim to "stress" or "burnout". Freudenberger and Richelson (10) define burnout as:

> "...To deplete oneself. To exhaust one's physical and mental resources. To wear oneself out by excessively striving to reach some unrealistic expectation imposed by oneself or by the values of society." (p.14)

Are all agricultural education teachers prone to burnout? Cano (3) stated that those most likely to get burned out are those who are truly dedicated and committed to the profession of teaching agricultural education.

Following the thoughts of the demands placed on agricultural teachers, Kotrlik and Malek (21) reported that the percentage of vocational agriculture teachers who leave the profession is higher than the percentage for other teaching fields.

Craig (6) and Knight (19) reported that many vocational agriculture teachers leave the profession within the first five years, indicating dissatisfaction with some aspect of teaching. Similar to the reports by Craig and Knight, Thomson, Gwynn, Palmer, and Eaker (31) found in a study in California that 49 percent of the teachers that switched schools did so after only one year at their first teaching job. In addition, 86 percent of them switched schools within three years after beginning their teaching careers. This indicates that job dissatisfaction with the school or the teaching profession often results in resignation or changing schools rather quickly. However, this is not that uncommon considering that frequent job changing is not unusual for recent college graduates.

Vossler (32) concluded that the major factors causing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession were limited opportunity for advancement, salary, too

many extra-curricular activities, uncertainty of employment, and facilities undesirable for teaching agriculture. In the same type of study, Lamberth (22) found that salary was the primary factor causing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession. Poor facilities, inadequate supplies, and a lack of support by school administrators closely followed this. In an article written by Zurbrik (34) in 1980 about a teacher shortage stated that it was his belief that a shortage was not the problem, but of providing the economic environment to attract those qualified teachers that are not teaching to enter the teaching profession. Fenton (8) supported the findings of Vossler and Lamberth in reporting the major reasons why Oklahoma vocational agriculture teachers left the profession as: (1) Limited opportunity for promotion, (2) Excessive and inconsistent hours on the job, (3) Insufficient salary, and (4) Personal conflict among teachers and school administrators.

However, Reece (28) reported that administration and supervision was not shown to be a significant factor in the reasons teachers leave the profession. Reece further stated that the community situation was of little importance to teachers leaving the profession. For the reasons why vocational agriculture teachers left the profession, Reece's study concluded that (1) salary was too low in comparison to job responsibilities, (2) promotional opportunities in other agricultural areas were not as limited, (3) more time with family available in other occupational areas, (4) limited promotional opportunity in the local school, (5) inadequacy of teacher retirement system, and (6) the desire for more independence on the job.

Heathcott (17) reported that discipline problems, time required for FFA activities, state reports, little opportunity to specialize, over-emphasis of athletics, and

failure to adjust to school schedules were factors having some influence on teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession. In regards to discipline problems, Reece (28) found school discipline was too relaxed to be of moderate importance as to why teachers left the profession. Knight and Bender summarized the factors related to why vocational agriculture teachers quit teaching as follows: (1) Long range occupational goals were other than teaching vocational agriculture, (2) There were students in class who should not have been in vocational agriculture, (3) Inadequate opportunities for advancement, (4) Long hours, and (5) Inadequate salary. Reilly and Welton (30) reported that adequate equipment and tools for effective instruction were unavailable for the vocational agriculture department in their schools, resulting in teachers leaving the profession.

Clapp (5) noted an often-found desire to slow down from the grind of livestock shows, judging contests, and community relations programs among vocational agriculture teachers and indicated the only way to do this may be to move to another school or a job outside the teaching profession.

Teacher Satisfaction

What does teacher satisfaction have to do with turnover? Grady (12) stated that the departure of vocational agriculture teachers from the profession implies dissatisfaction with at least some aspect of teaching, and Gruneberg (14) found a definite relationship between turnover and job satisfaction.

During the time teachers are teaching, they seem to be rather satisfied with their jobs. Grady (12) found that vocational agriculture teachers in Louisiana expressed

moderate levels of satisfaction with their jobs and that more experienced teachers reported higher levels of satisfaction than beginning teachers. Flowers and Pepple (9) reported on morale of beginning vocational agriculture teachers in Illinois, and found that they were moderately satisfied with their jobs. They also found that the major factors associated with lower levels of morale were salaries received and teaching load. At the same time, they found that student participation in supervised agricultural experience programs was associated with higher levels of teacher morale.

Grady (13) found that teachers teaching in smaller schools are more satisfied with teaching vocational agriculture. Many would say this is due to the assumption that smaller schools seem to have less discipline problems, better co-worker relations, and less pressure. Also, smaller schools, which are usually found in more rural areas, may place more emphasis on agriculture than larger, more urban schools. Concerning student discipline problems, Gorczyca (11) and Litt and Turk (24) suggest that student misbehavior or discipline problems have little bearing on job satisfaction.

Thomson, Gwynn, Palmer and Eaker (31) found in a California study that 25 percent of the teachers indicated a lack of support from administration. Litt and Turk (24) also suggest that dissatisfaction with supervisors appears to be major source of concern among vocational agriculture teachers. This follows a study conducted by Miller (26) concerning first year teachers' morale and behavior which found that teacher rapport with the principal, dissatisfaction with teaching, teaching loads, and school facilities were those areas of primary concern. In a study conducted by Haberland (15) concerning job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers in the southeast district of Oklahoma, there was evidence of dissatisfaction with regard to

school policies and personal relationships with school administration, particularly the principals. Other areas of dissatisfaction among teachers that Haberland found were the perceived conflict developed among co-workers by groups forming cliques and the uneasiness of teachers with regard to their job security.

Teacher Retention

What factors are associated with a teacher staying with a particular job? With information stated earlier, it is obvious that teachers must be satisfied with their jobs. Thomson, Gwynn, Palmer and Eaker (31) stated that teachers can be happy if they are confident in their ability and if their competency is recognized by others.

With information presented earlier in this chapter concerning dissatisfaction with administrators, one would think that administrators would have a great deal of influence in turnover or retention of teachers. However, Chapman (4) found little evidence of a direct relationship between administrator behavior and turnover among teacher education graduates at the University of Michigan.

The most common quality of successful teachers was reported by Vossler (32) to be the ability to understand and get along with people. This should also apply to a teacher who has built tenure at a school.

In the area of retaining a young teacher, Blezek (1) found that the first year of teaching was very important. A bad experience the first year may cause many teachers to move after the first year or to quit the teaching profession.

It was stated earlier in the chapter that student misbehavior or discipline problems have little bearing on job satisfaction. However, Reilly and Welton (30)

reported that students might be the main factor in encouraging teachers to remain in or quit teaching.

In a study done by Magarrell (25), it was stated that (1) potential salary increases are not highly important in getting faculty members to move, and (2) the family responsibilities are not highly important in keeping faculty members from moving. What really counts is where the job is located. Rielly (29) supported this by indicating that, with the situation of supply and demand of vocational agriculture teachers, agricultural education graduates have the opportunity to select among schools in which they teach. Reilly (29) further suggested that agricultural education graduates could be particular in where they teach. This could also apply to teachers already teaching and may be a factor as to why teachers change schools in which they teach.

In reporting on a shortage problem, Craig (7) commented that graduates do not want to leave home to teach in another area of the state or another state. Reilly (29) also found that graduates seek a particular teaching position or a position in a certain area of the state. Along these lines, Knight and Bender (18) found a strong relationship among teachers leaving the profession and taking jobs closer to their home or their spouses' home.

Phelps (27) reported that Iowa teachers indicated that they decided to remain in the profession because (1) teachers wished to remain in work associated with farming, (2) enjoyment of small town environment and rural living associated with farm people, (3) enjoyment of associations with fellow vocational agriculture teachers, (4) opportunity to work outdoors, and (5) the opportunity and enjoyment of working with and counseling young people. Other factors influencing teachers to continue teaching

were reported by Brown (2) from a 13 state survey. They were: (1) Desire of rural life situations, (2) Enjoyment of FFA activities and teaching high school students, (3) Feelings of accomplishment and success, (4) Opportunities to develop own program, and (5) Pride in the profession. Knight and Dickens (20) also stated that teachers remaining in the profession rated teaching and working with high school students important in their decisions to remain in the profession. Furthermore, they stated that association with agriculture and farm people, along with twelve-month employment, were important factors to teachers remaining in the profession.

Reilly and Welton (30) stated that teachers receive a lot of enjoyment from working with people, especially rural people. They also recommended that secondary school administrators should be made aware of an existing vocational agriculture teacher shortage and that those schools experiencing relatively high rates of teacher turnover should be encouraged to support and adequately equip the vocational agriculture department in their particular school.

Summary

Certain studies on the supply and demand of agricultural education teachers revealed a shortage in past years. As established in Zurbrik's (34) study, the shortage of agricultural education teachers was not a result of disinterest in the profession, but rather a result of many qualified agricultural education teachers not teaching due to certain economic factors, which result in job dissatisfaction. Many qualified teachers change professions or change schools frequently because of dissatisfaction with their

work. There seems to be a direct correlation between reasons why agricultural education teachers change professions and schools.

The most obvious factor why vocational agriculture teachers are unhappy in their working environment seems to be insufficient salary levels, while the least relevant factor, though not uncommon, is personal conflict among other teachers and lack of support from school administrators. Other major factors include (1) limited advancement opportunities, (2) long hours, (3) very little free time to spend with family or friends, and (4) undesirable facilities and equipment. A study by Heathcott (17) even revealed that over-emphasis of athletics influenced many vocational agriculture teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession.

In contrast to factors causing job dissatisfaction among agricultural education teachers, some studies also indicated factors associated with why agricultural education teachers stay with a particular job in the teaching field.

Vossler (32) reported the most common quality of successful teachers to be the ability to understand and get along with people, as well as achieving tenure at a particular school. Other factors included in job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers were (1) confidence in their ability to teach effectively, (2) frequent recognition of their competency by others, and (3) increased student participation in supervised agricultural experience programs. The two most interesting factors noted that result in job satisfaction among vocational agriculture teachers were job location and teaching in small rural schools. The job location factor is supported by papers from Craig (7) who commented that graduates do not want to leave home to teach in another area of the state or another state, Reilly (29), who found that graduates seek a particular

teaching position or a position in a certain area of the state, and Knight and Bender (18) who found a strong relationship among teachers leaving the profession and taking jobs closer to their home or their spouses' home.

How do these findings relate to the reasons associated with agricultural education teachers changing schools? It is believed by this researcher that factors associated with teacher dissatisfaction and teachers leaving the profession are very similar to those factors associated with teachers changing schools.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methods used and the procedures followed in conducting this study. In order to collect data, which would provide information to the purpose and objectives of the study, it was necessary to determine the population and to develop an instrument for data collection. It was also necessary to develop procedures for data collection and select methods of data analysis.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the intent and purpose of the study, the following objectives were established.

1. To identify the number of agricultural education teachers that changed schools in Oklahoma from July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001.
2. To develop a profile of agricultural education teachers who changed schools.
3. To determine the extent of influence the following had on the decision of agricultural education teachers to change schools: Contract related factors, job location factors, personal preference factors, community factors, administration factors, school faculty factors, facilities and equipment factors, and student factors.

The Population

The population of the study was limited to the agricultural education teachers in the state of Oklahoma that had moved directly from one school to another school between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 2001. A list of these teachers was compiled from past Oklahoma agricultural education teacher and staff directories obtained from the Agricultural Education Division of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education. During the five-year period, there were a total of 81 school changes involving teachers moving directly from one school to another school. The 81 school changes involved 74 different teachers, including 5 teachers that changed schools twice and one that changed schools three times during the five-year period. Current addresses were obtained through the 2000 agricultural education teacher and staff directory and interviews with professors at Oklahoma State University and the staff of the Agricultural Education Division at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education.

Development of the Instrument

To gather information concerning the factors associated with school changes among agricultural education teachers, a restricted form questionnaire was developed (See Appendix A). The questionnaire was developed by the researcher from ideas obtained by brainstorming, a review of the literature, and a review of questionnaires used by Layton (23), White (33), Reece (28), Harrison (16), and Haberland (15).

The format of the questionnaire included nine demographic type questions and four yes/no questions concerning contract negotiations. In addition, the questionnaire

included a five-point interval scale ranging from "very great" to "none", so that the respondents could indicate the amount of influence selected factors had on their decision to change schools. These factors were broken into categories concerning location, personal preference, community, administration, faculty, facilities and equipment, and students.

Help was received to refine the instrument from the agricultural education staff at Oklahoma State University and the Spring 1992 class of AGED 5980, Research Design.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy require review and approval of all research studies that involve human subjects before investigators can begin their research. The Oklahoma State University Office of University Research Services and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) conduct this review to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in biomedical and behavioral research. In compliance with the aforementioned policy this study received the proper surveillance and was granted permission to continue. The project number assigned by the IRB was AG026. A copy of the approval form is located in appendix C.

Collection of Data

The questionnaire was administered by mail on September 27, 2001. A questionnaire was sent to all 74 teachers that had changed schools during the allotted time period and two questionnaires were sent to those five teachers who changed

schools twice and three questionnaires were sent to the teacher that changed schools three times during the time period. During the week of October 1, a questionnaire was personally delivered to 19 teachers that were attending the Tulsa State Fair. A second questionnaire was mailed on October 8, 2001 to those that did not respond to the first mailing or the personal delivery. Thirty-three or 45 percent responded to the first questionnaire mailed or personally delivered and 10 more on the second mailing, totaling 43 respondents or 58 percent of the 74 teachers.

A telephone survey of four of the non-respondents was conducted. Five questionnaires were received from the non-respondents after the cut off date October 31, 2001. In all, data were received from 29% of the non-respondents. In comparing these to the responses received within the time limits, the researcher found no notable differences and concluded these would not have substantially altered the findings. Of the 81 questionnaires sent, 44 useable responses were received for a total response rate of 54.32%.

Analysis of Data

For the purpose of calculating mean responses, the five point interval scale used to elicit responses concerning the amount of influence selected factors had on teachers' decisions to change schools was assigned the following values: Very Great = 4; Great = 3; Moderate = 2; Some = 1; None = 0. To interpret these mean responses, true value limits established for each category were as follows: 3.5 to 4.0 - Very Great; 2.5 to 3.49 – Great; 1.50 to 2.49 – Moderate; .50 to 1.49 – Some; and 0 to .49 - None. Those respondents that answered yes to any of the four questions concerning contract

negotiations were not included in the interval scale analysis, because the other factors would not have influenced their changing schools. For each of the factors, a frequency distribution, percentage, and mean score were calculated.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The major purpose of this chapter is to present, describe and analyze the findings associated with employment changes from school to school among agricultural education teachers in Oklahoma from July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001.

The findings are presented in nine sections corresponding to the nine sections on the questionnaire, as well as the nine objectives of the research study previously outlined. These sections were: (1) Demographics (2) Contract Negotiations (3) Job Location (4) Personal Preferences (5) Community (6) Administration (7) Faculty (8) Facilities and Equipment and (9) Students.

Demographics

Tables I through VI were developed to report selected demographic information. Two of the respondents were female representing 67% of the females in the population. The number of years experience teaching high school agriculture is reported in Table I. Teaching experience of the respondents ranged from 1 to 20 years with a mean of 5.82. Of those responding, 31 (70.5%) had five years or fewer teaching experience. This is in agreement with a study done by Thomson, Gwynn, Palmer, and Eaker (31) in California

that found that 86% of the teachers that switched schools did so within three years after beginning their teaching careers.

TABLE I

RESPONDENTS' NUMBER OF YEARS EXPERIENCE TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE

Range of years	N	(%)
1 – 5	31	70.5
6 – 10	3	6.8
11 –15	6	13.6
16 – 20	4	9.1

Mean = 5.82

Table II was developed to report the number of years experience teaching high school agriculture in Oklahoma. This turned out to be identical to the number of years experience teaching high school agriculture as reported in Table I. Teaching experience in Oklahoma of the respondents ranged from 1 to 20 years with a mean of 5.68. Of those responding, 31 (70.5%) had five years or fewer teaching experience in Oklahoma.

TABLE II

RESPONDENTS' NUMBER OF YEARS EXPERIENCE TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE IN OKLAHOMA

Range of years	N	(%)
1 – 5	31	70.5
6 – 10	3	6.8
11 –15	6	13.6
16 – 20	4	9.1

Mean = 5.68

Table III contains data illustrating the number of time respondents changed schools in their teaching career. The number of times the respondents changed schools in their teaching career ranged from 1 to 4 with a mean of 1.66. Of those responding, 28 (63.6%) had only changed schools one time, while 7 (15.9%) had changed schools 2 times, 5 (11.4%) had changed schools three times and 4 (9.1%) had changed schools 4 times in their teaching careers.

TABLE III

NUMBER OF TIMES RESPONDENTS CHANGED SCHOOLS

Number of times changed schools	N	(%)
1	28	63.6
2	7	15.9
3	5	11.4
4	4	9.1

Mean = 1.66

The average number of years spent at each school is reported in Table IV. The average number of years spent at each school employed ranged from 1 to 15. Twenty-six (59.16%) had spent three years or less at each school, while 10 (22.7%) had spent 4 to 6 years at each school and 8 (18.1%) had spent seven or more years at each school.

TABLE IV

AVERAGE YEARS OF RESPONDENTS' EMPLOYMENT AT EACH SCHOOL

Range	N	(%)
1 – 3	26	59.1
4 – 6	10	22.7
7 – 9	4	9.1
10 – 12	2	4.5
13 - 15	2	4.5

Table V was developed to show the age of the respondents at the time of changing schools. The age of the respondents at the time of changing schools ranged from 23 to 49 with a mean of 29.7. Twenty-eight (63.6%) were less than 30 years of age. Nine (20.5%) were from 30 to 36. Six (13.6%) were from 37 to 43 and 1 (2.3%) was from 44 to 50.

TABLE V

AGE OF RESPONDENTS AT TIME OF CHANGING SCHOOLS

Range	N	(%)
23 -29	28	63.6
30 - 36	9	20.5
37 - 43	6	13.6
44 - 50	1	2.3

Mean = 29.7

Marital status of the respondents is reported in Table VI. Forty (90.1%) were married and 4 (9.1%) were single.

TABLE VI

MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

Marital Status	N	(%)
Married	40	90.9
Single	4	9.1

Contract Related Factors

Section two of the questionnaire addressed certain contract factors that might have been involved with agricultural education teachers changing schools. Four yes/no questions were asked to determine if contract negotiations had an impact on the changing of schools. As reported in Table VII, all four questions were answered "no" by 100% (44) of the respondents indicating that contract negotiations are not a factor associated with school changes among agricultural education teachers.

TABLE VII

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE OF CONTRACT RELATED FACTORS ON DECISION TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

Contract Related Factors	YES	(%)	NO	(%)
Agriculture department was discontinued.	0	0.0	44	100
Agriculture department had a reduction of a teacher.	0	0.0	44	100
School was consolidated.	0	0.0	44	100
Contract was not renewed.	0	0.0	44	100

Job Location

Section three of the questionnaire addressed the area of job location. Respondents were asked to respond to four factors concerned with job location to determine the influence of each on agricultural education teachers changing schools. The factor in this section receiving the highest mean score was "To get closer to your hometown" with 59.1% (26) of the respondents placing this factor in the very great or great categories (See Table VIII). The mean value for this response was 2.63 indicating a great amount of influence as a factor influencing agricultural education teachers to change schools. The other factor in this section with a mean score high enough to indicate a moderate amount of influence was "To get closer to your spouses hometown". The mean score for this factor was 1.39. These findings are in agreement with a study done by Craig (7) that stated that graduates do not want to leave home to teach in another area of the state. Reilly (29) found that graduates seek a particular teaching position or a position in a certain area of the state, Knight and Bender (18) found a strong relationship among teachers leaving the profession and taking jobs closer to their home or their spouses' home, and Magarrell (25) stated that what really matters in getting faculty members to move is where the job is located. "To get closer to your spouse's job location," had a mean score of 0.82 indicating "some" amount of influence and "Spouse could not find employment" had a mean score of 0.30 with 88.6 percent of the respondents placing this factor in the "none" category, indicating no amount of influence as a factor to change schools.

TABLE VIII

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE OF JOB LOCATION FACTORS ON DECISION TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

	Distribution by Amount of Influence										
	Very Great		Great		Moderate		Some		None		Mean
Job Location Factors	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
To get closer to your hometown. N=44	21	47.7	5	11.4	1	2.3	3	6.8	14	31.8	2.63
To get closer to your spouse's hometown. N=44	10	22.7	3	6.8	4	9.1	4	9.1	23	52.3	1.39
To get closer to your spouse's job location. N=44	8	18.2	0	0.0	2	4.5	0	0.0	34	77.3	0.82
Spouse could not find employment. N=44	1	2.3	2	4.5	1	2.3	1	2.3	39	88.6	0.30

Personal Preference

Section four of the questionnaire addressed selected factors of personal preference. Respondents were asked to respond to ten factors concerned to determine the influence each had on the respondents changing schools. As indicated in Table IX, the factor in this section receiving the highest mean score, 1.52, was "Wanted to build up a program considered to be down or new" with 56.8% (25) of the respondents signifying this factor had at least "some" influence on their decision to change schools. This translated to a "moderate" amount of influence for changing schools. Five other factors received mean scores indicating they had been of influence on teachers changing schools; they were "To have the opportunity to work more with a different area in agriculture such

TABLE IX

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE OF PERSONAL PREFERENCE FACTORS ON DECISION TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

	Distribution by Amount of Influence										
	Very Great		Great		Moderate		Some		None		Mean
Personal Preference Factors	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
Wanted to build up a program considered to be down or new. N=44	4	9.1	13	29.5	4	9.1	4	9.1	19	43.2	1.52
To have the opportunity to work more with a different area in agriculture (different species of livestock, horticulture, mecag, etc.). N=44	7	15.9	4	9.1	9	20.5	6	13.6	18	40.9	1.46
Did not feel secure in position (uncertainty of employment) N=44	6	13.6	6	13.6	5	11.4	3	6.8	24	54.5	1.25
Salary was too low (went to a better paying school). N=44	5	11.4	4	9.1	8	18.2	2	4.5	25	56.8	1.14
Wanted to go to a program that did more livestock showing N=44	4	9.1	4	9.1	8	18.2	0	0.0	28	63.6	1.00
Wanted to teach in a larger school. N=44	6	13.6	1	2.3	3	6.8	4	9.1	30	68.2	0.84
Wanted to change from a single teacher to a multiple teacher department. N=44	4	9.1	0	0.0	2	4.5	1	2.3	37	84.1	0.48
Wanted to teach in a smaller school N=44	1	2.3	2	4.5	1	2.3	1	2.3	39	88.6	0.30
Wanted to go to a program that did less livestock showing. N=44	2	4.5	0	0.0	2	4.5	1	2.3	39	88.6	0.30
Wanted to change from a multiple teacher to a single teacher department. N=44	1	2.3	1	2.3	1	2.3	1	2.3	40	90.9	0.23

as a different species of livestock, horticulture, mechanized agriculture, etc." (Mean 1.46); "Did not feel secure in position or uncertainty of employment" (mean 1.25); "Salary was too low" (mean 1.14); "Wanted to go to a program that did more livestock showing" (mean 1.00); and "Wanted to teach in a larger school" (mean 0.84).

The remaining three areas in this section had mean values below 0.49, which translated to a "none" level of influence as factors for agriculture education teachers to change schools.

Community

Respondents were presented with five selected factors concerned with the community to determine the influence of each on agricultural education teachers changing schools. The findings relative to these are reported in Table X. "Pressure from the community to expand activities" was the only area in the section that yielded a "none" amount of influence as a factor for agriculture education teachers to change schools with a mean score of 0.27 (See Table X). The mean scores for the four remaining factors were found to be as follows: "Lack of appreciation from community" (1.00), "Community attitude toward agriculture program was not desirable" (0.73), "Was difficult for teachers to gain acceptance by the people in the community" (0.59) and "Community placed too much emphasis on winning" (0.50). All of these fit into the "some" amount of influence category as factors for agriculture education teachers to change schools.

TABLE X

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE
OF COMMUNITY FACTORS ON DECISION
TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

	Distribution by Amount of Influence										
	Very Great		Great		Moderate		Some		None		Mean
Community Factors	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
Lack of appreciation from community. N=44	5	11.4	3	6.8	5	11.4	5	11.4	26	59.1	1.00
Community attitude toward agriculture program was not desirable. N=44	3	6.8	0	0.0	8	18.2	4	9.1	29	65.9	0.73
Was difficult for teachers to gain acceptance by the people in the community. N=44	2	4.5	2	4.5	4	9.1	5	11.4	31	70.5	0.59
Community placed too much emphasis on winning. N=44	2	4.5	1	2.3	2	4.5	7	15.9	32	72.7	0.50
Pressure from community to expand activities N=44	0	0.0	2	4.5	1	2.3	4	9.1	37	84.1	0.27

School Administration

Respondents were asked to assess five factors concerned with school administration to determine how much influence each had on their changing schools. Table X contains a summary of findings related to these. "Lack of interest, appreciation and support expressed by the administration for the agriculture program" and "Disciplinary students were being placed in class without consultation (agriculture program was a dumping ground)" each received a mean rating of 1.21 or "some" influence and were the highest rated factors. Lamberth (22) also found that lack of support by school administrators was a factor causing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession. In a study in California, Thomson, Gwynn, Palmer and Eaker (31) stated that 25% of the teachers indicated a lack of support from administration. Litt and Turk (24) suggest that dissatisfaction with supervisors appears to be a major source of concern among vocational agriculture teachers and in a study by Haberland (15) concerning job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers in the southeast district of Oklahoma, there was evidence of dissatisfaction with regard to personal relationships with school administration, particularly principals. The other two factors in this section that received "some" amount of influence ratings were "Had a personality conflict with an administrator" (0.89) and "Administration didn't allow participation in all the activities you thought necessary" (0.52). The other factor, "Administration expected participation in too many extracurricular activities" with a mean response of .41 was determined to fit in the "none" category of influence.

TABLE XI

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION FACTORS ON DECISION TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

	Distribution by Amount of Influence										
	Very Great		Great		Moderate		Some		None		Mean
School Administration Factors	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
Lack of interest, appreciation and support expressed by the administration for the agriculture program. N=44	6	13.6	4	9.1	6	13.6	4	9.1	24	54.5	1.21
Disciplinary students were being placed in class without consultation (agriculture program was a dumping ground). N=44	4	9.1	4	9.1	10	22.7	5	11.4	21	47.7	1.21
Had a personality conflict with an administrator. N=44	6	13.6	0	0.0	5	11.4	4	9.1	29	65.9	0.89
Administration didn't allow participation in all the activities you thought necessary. N=44	2	4.5	0	0.0	5	11.4	4	9.1	33	75.0	0.52
Administration expected participation in too many extracurricular activities. N=44	0	0.0	2	4.5	4	9.1	4	9.1	34	77.3	0.41

School Faculty

The influence of six selected factors concerned with school faculty as reasons for changing schools was another area of the study. Related findings are in Table XII. For the factor, "There was a sense of jealousy toward the agriculture teacher by other teachers" 40.9% (18) of the respondents assigned varying levels of influence. The mean influence rating of .71 fell into the "some" category. The only other area in this section drawing at least some amount of mean influence was "Faculty had a tendency to form cliques" with a mean of 0.55. The other areas in this section: "There was a great deal of griping, arguing, taking sides and feuding among teachers" (mean 0.34), "Counselor was advising students to not take agriculture classes" (mean 0.32), "Had a poor rapport with fellow teachers" (mean 0.13) and "Did not get along with another teacher in the agriculture department" (mean 0.02) were found to be in the "none" amount of influence on agricultural education teachers changing schools.

Facilities and Equipment

The job change influence of certain elements related to facilities and equipment were addressed in the investigation. Table XIII contains a summary of the data collected regarding these. Five questions were asked the respondents to determine if any factors dealing with facilities and equipment had an influence on agricultural education teachers changing schools. All of the areas except "Lack of other equipment" (mean 0.43 – "none") were shown to be of influence on agricultural education teachers changing schools. These other four areas: "Lack of adequate classroom environment and equipment" (mean 1.09), "Lack of adequate shop and equipment" (mean 1.02), "Lack of

TABLE XII

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE
OF SCHOOL FACULTY FACTORS ON
DECISION TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

	Distribution by Amount of Influence										
	Very Great		Great		Moderate		Some		None		Mean
School Faculty Factors	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
There was a sense of jealousy toward the agriculture teacher by other teachers. N=44	2	4.5	1	2.3	5	11.4	10	22.7	26	59.1	0.71
Faculty had a tendency to form cliques. N=44	0	0.0	3	6.8	3	6.8	9	20.5	29	65.9	0.55
There was a great deal of griping, arguing, taking sides and feuding among teachers. N=44	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	9.1	7	15.9	33	75.0	0.34
Counselor was advising students to not take agriculture classes. N=44	0	0.0	1	2.30.0	4	9.1	3	6.8	36	81.8	0.32
Had a poor rapport with fellow teachers. N=44	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.3	4	9.1	39	88.6	0.13
Did not get along with another teacher in the agriculture department. N=44	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.3	43	97.7	0.02

TABLE XIII

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE
OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT FACTORS
ON DECISION TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

	Distribution by Amount of Influence										
	Very Great		Great		Moderate		Some		None		Mean
Facilities and Equipment Factors	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
Lack of adequate classroom environment and equipment N=44	4	9.1	5	11.4	5	11.4	7	15.9	23	52.3	1.09
Lack of adequate shop and equipment. N=44	4	9.1	5	11.4	5	11.4	4	9.1	26	59.1	1.02
Lack of adequate livestock equipment. N=44	4	9.1	2	4.5	9	20.5	5	11.4	24	54.5	1.02
Lack of adequate transportation N=44	5	11.4	3	6.8	4	9.1	7	15.9	25	56.8	1.00
Lack of other equipment N=44	2	4.5	0	0.0	4	9.1	3	6.8	35	79.5	0.43

adequate livestock equipment" (mean 1.02) and "Lack of adequate transportation" (mean 1.00) had very similar mean scores, all in the "some" classification. This is in agreement with; Vossler (32) who concluded that facilities undesirable for teaching agriculture was a major factor causing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession, teachers to leave the profession, and Reilly and Welton (30) who reported that adequate equipment and tools for effective instruction were unavailable for the vocational agriculture department in their schools, resulting in teachers leaving the profession

Students

The final section of the study concentrated on students. The respondents were asked to respond to nine selected factors concerned with students to determine their influence on agricultural education teachers changing schools. Six of the nine factors received their mean scores in the "some" amount of influence category. The highest rated was "Lack of participation by students (contests, SAE.s, etc) with a mean score of 1.00. This finding was supported by Flowers and Pepple (9) who found that student participation in supervised agricultural experience programs was associated with higher levels of teacher morale. The factors "Students did not appreciate your effort put forth on their behalf" (mean 0.89), "School discipline was too relaxed" (mean 0.82), "Wanted more students" (mean 0.77), "Had run out of talented students" (mean 0.64) and "Was failing to get good students into program" (mean 0.50) also had mean scores indicating "some" amount of influence on changing schools. The factors showing a "none" amount of influence on agricultural education teachers changing schools were "Had too many discipline

TABLE XIV

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE
OF STUDENT FACTORS ON DECISION
TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

	Distribution by Amount of Influence										
	Very Great		Great		Moderate		Some		None		Mean
Student Factors	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	
Lack of participation by students (contests, SAE's, etc.). N=44	3	6.8	2	4.5	7	15.9	12	27.3	20	45.5	1.00
Students did not appreciate your effort put forth on their behalf. N=44	3	6.8	4	9.1	4	9.1	7	15.9	26	59.1	0.89
School discipline was to relaxed. N=44	3	6.8	3	6.8	3	6.8	9	20.5	26	59.1	0.82
Wanted more students. N=44	3	6.8	4	9.1	4	9.1	2	4.5	31	70.5	0.77
Had run out of talented students. N=44	1	2.3	2	4.5	5	11.4	8	18.2	28	63.6	0.64
Was failing to get good students into program. N=44	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	13.6	10	22.7	28	63.6	0.50
Had too many disciplinary problems. N=44	0	0.0	2	4.5	3	6.8	9	20.5	30	68.2	0.48
Did not get respect from students. N=44	2	4.5	0	0.0	1	2.3	2	4.5	39	88.6	0.27
Had too many students N=44	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	4.5	3	6.8	39	88.6	0.16

problems" (mean 0.48), "Did not get respect from students" (mean 0.27) and "Had too many students" (mean 0.16).

Open-ended Question

An open-ended question "If you were to leave your present school, what would be the reasons associated with your leaving?" was presented at the end of the questionnaire. The following are directly quoted comments of those who responded.

1. Move to administration
2. More money
3. Retirement, salary
4. Administration
5. Staying for now
6. Being fired – I plan to finish my career at my current school
7. Lack of support from new administration
8. Lack of discipline & too much sports
9. Administration not supporting FFA & classroom activities
10. To go to a position with set hours
11. Better salary to work in industry
12. A family situation or personal reason would probably be the only reason I would move again. Possibly a change in administration. I moved twice because the school downsized that I worked at. I was working in a great school before my last move. I only moved to be able to work closer to my spouse's work and my children's school.
13. Don't really know for sure. Maybe if it started being a dumping ground & quantity was more important than quality to the administration.

14. School administration is somewhat unorganized & too relaxed in disciplining students.

15. Would seek employment in a higher salary range. We put in too many hours for the amount of pay.

16. The administration

17. Different career

18. Happy where I am at.

19. Money

20. If I felt I was no longer an integral part of the school, a positive influence on students, burnt out and not doing my job to its full potential. One other factor would be only if the program shut down. My number one reason for leaving ?? was my chance to move back to my hometown and teach, otherwise I had no intentions on leaving ?? any time soon.

21. Parents

22. More money or better facilities

23. Lack of support from administrators. (sports is greatly emphasized at all schools)

24. Ag has become a dumping ground and I am "Assistant School Custodian"

25. Take an administrative position (principal)

26. Hours away from my family. We should get 6 yrs for each 5. Actually we should get an extra year every 3 yrs because a 9-month teacher is given 1 pt/yr.

27. More money, better insurance benefits. The main reason for my relocation was to be back home for myself and wife. The school I was at always had the possibility of not offering Ag the next year. When I was hired, I was told of this possibility. Also consolidation was a possibility. Not a very secure work environment.

28. Lack of time with family & better pay

29. Community support is low. Expectations are high. Administration at this time.

30. Leave for higher salary

31. Get closer to home & back to a smaller school if I thought the smaller school was financially secure

32. Lack of discipline, overall respect for administration, students don't have respect for other students as well as school equipment

33. Wife getting new job.

34. Retirement or lack of quality students put in Ag. Program

35. I left Ag. Ed. Teaching in '98 for a principal's job. Bottom line: People think you're a tool to be used at will. It turned into a 24/7 job. Also, too many livestock shows people expect you to be at. My new job is less stressful and I have more personal time than either one of my Ag jobs.

36. I am now in school administration and I have wonderful students and staff. Community politics are a major reason for location of staff – I would possibly relocate for advancement opportunities and/or salary/benefit increases.

37. More money. Better locations

38. I left the classroom 2 years ago to move to the State Dept. f Career and Technology Education. Reasons: Spouse found a much better job; Increase in salary: More free time to pursue personal interests and work toward an advanced degree; New and changing interests in my career goals; greater opportunity for advancement.

39. I left teaching in June 200 due to a desire to work on my Masters & gain administrative experience. I enjoyed & loved teaching but wanted to advance myself.

40. I have left my last program to venture into administration. I am currently serving as a principal with my Supt's certification. I saw problems in our Ag. Ed Program not discussed in the above questions. Longevity of funding by the State Dept. of Ed. Along with a greater accountability in justification of such programs. I believe that an Ag. Ed program can be the single most successful program in the public school with a reputation of preparing & equipping students to make it in the business and political world, but not all schools have that focus. Ag. Ed. Also offers great opp. In the science field for which to date students cannot acquire credits with increased testing and accountability. Not only teachers, but programs could be lost.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the study problem and its setting, the design and conduct of the study and the major findings. Also presented are conclusions and recommendations, which were based upon analysis and summarization of data collected and upon observations and impressions resulting from the design and conduct of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the factors associated with school employment changes among agricultural education teachers in Oklahoma from July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the intent and purpose of the study, the following objectives were established.

1. To identify the number of agricultural education teachers that changed schools in Oklahoma from July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001.

2. To develop a profile of agricultural education teachers who changed schools.

3. To determine the extent of influence the following had on the decision of agricultural education teachers to change schools: Contract related factors, job location factors, personal preference factors, community factors, administration factors, school faculty factors, facilities and equipment factors, and student factors.

Population

The population for this study consisted of 74 agricultural education teachers who had moved directly from one school to another school in Oklahoma during the time period of July 1, 1996 to June 30, 2001. These 74 teachers had changed schools 81 times during the time period. A list and contact information of these teachers was compiled from past Oklahoma agricultural education teacher and staff directories obtained from the Agricultural Education division of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education. Forty-four questionnaires were returned, a 54% response rate.

Design and Procedure

Instrument

The survey instrument was limited to a one-page cover letter and a five-page questionnaire. The cover letter was used to describe the purpose of the study and to explain how confidentiality would be maintained. The questionnaire was broken down into nine sections as listed below:

(1) Demographics

(2) Contract Related Factors

(3) Location Factors

(4) Personal Preference Factors

(5) Community Factors

(6) Administration Factors

(7) Faculty Factors

(8) Facilities and Equipment Factors

(9) Student Factors

Data Collection

The data were collected by means of a questionnaire mailed on September 27, 2001 to the entire population. A self-addressed, stamped, return envelope was included in the mailing. A questionnaire was sent to all 74 teachers that had changed schools during the allotted time period, two questionnaires were sent to those five teachers who changed schools twice and three questionnaires were sent to the teacher that changed schools three times during the time period. During the week of October 1, a questionnaire was personally delivered to 19 teachers that were attending the Tulsa State Fair. A second questionnaire was mailed on October 8, 2001 to those that did not respond to the first mailing or the personal delivery. Thirty-three or 45 percent responded to the first questionnaire mailed or personally delivered and 10 more on the second mailing, totaling 43 respondents or 58 percent of the 74 teachers. Of the 81 questionnaires sent, 44 useable responses were received for a total response rate of 54.32%.

A telephone survey of 4 of the non-respondents was conducted. Additionally five questionnaires were received from the non-respondents after the cut off date October 31, 2001. In all, data were received from 29% of those that did not respond by the stated deadline. The researcher determined that including these responses were not substantially different from those that were included in the study.

Analysis of Data

A five point interval scale was used to elicit responses concerning the amount of influence different factors had on teachers' decisions to change schools and was assigned the following values: Very Great = 4; Great = 3; Moderate = 2; Some = 1; None = 0. To interpret these mean responses, true value limits established for each category were as follows: 3.5 to 4.0 - Very Great; 2.5 to 3.49 – Great; 1.50 to 2.49 – Moderate; .50 to 1.49 – Some; and 0 to .49 - None. For each of the factors, a frequency distribution, percentage, and mean score was calculated.

Summary of Findings

Demographics

For the 44 respondents, it was found that the number of years experience teaching high school agriculture ranged from 1 to 20 years with a mean of 5.82 and 70.5% (31) had five or fewer years of teaching experience. The mean for the number of years experience teaching high school agriculture in Oklahoma was identical to the number of years teaching high school agriculture.

The number of times the respondents changed schools in their teaching career ranged from 1 to 4 with a mean of 1.66. Of those responding, 63.6% (28) had only changed schools one time in their teaching career.

The average number of years spent at each school employed ranged from 1 to 15 with a mean of 4.11. Thirty-six, 81.9%, of the respondents were employed at each school for 6 or fewer years and 59.1% (26) for 1 to 3 years.

Age of the respondents ranged from 23 to 49 with a mean of 29.7. The largest group was from 23 to 29 years of age with 63.6% (28) being in this group. Only 15.9% (7) were more than 36 years old. Most of the respondents were married (90.9%) with only 4 (9.1%) being single.

Contract Related Factors

Of the four questions concerning contract related factors, 100% of the respondents answered "no" to all, indicating that contract related factors had no influence on this population to change schools.

Ranking of Factors

Respondents' ratings of all 44 job change factors on the questionnaire were summarized. To facilitate comparisons these factors are presented in Table XV, ranked according to mean scores. One factor "To get closer to your hometown" had a mean score above 2.50 and was found to have a "great" amount of influence. "Wanted to build a program considered to be down or new" was the only factor with a mean score between

TABLE XV

SUMMARY OF AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE OF SELECTED FACTORS ON DECISION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

Factors	Mean	Influence
To get closer to your hometown	2.63	Great
Wanted to build a program considered to be down or new	1.52	Moderate
To have the opportunity to work more with a different area in agriculture (different species of livestock, horticulture, mecag, etc.)	1.46	Some
To get closer to your spouses' hometown	1.39	Some
Did not feel secure in position	1.25	Some
Lack of interest, appreciation and support expressed by the administration for the agriculture program	1.20	Some
Disciplinary students were being placed in class without consultation	1.20	Some
Salary was too low (went to a better paying school)	1.14	Some
Lack of adequate classroom environment and equipment	1.09	Some
Lack of adequate livestock equipment	1.02	Some
Lack of adequate shop and equipment	1.02	Some
Lack of adequate transportation	1.00	Some
Wanted to go to a program that did more livestock showing	1.00	Some
Lack of appreciation from the community	1.00	Some
Lack of participation by students	1.00	Some
Had a personality conflict with an administrator	0.89	Some
Students did not appreciate your effort put forth on their behalf	0.89	Some
Wanted to teach in a larger school	0.84	Some
To get closer to your spouses' job location	0.82	Some
School discipline was too relaxed	0.82	Some
Wanted more students	0.77	Some
Community attitude toward agriculture program was not desirable	0.73	Some

TABLE XV continued

SUMMARY OF AMOUNT OF INFLUENCE OF SELECTED FACTORS ON DECISION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

Factors	Mean	Influence
There was a sense of jealously toward agriculture teacher by other teachers	0.70	Some
Had run out of talented students	0.64	Some
Was difficult for teachers to gain acceptance by the people in the community	0.59	Some
Faculty had a tendency to form cliques	0.56	Some
Administration didn't allow participation in all the activities you thought necessary	0.52	Some
Community placed too much emphasis on winning	0.5	Some
Was failing to get good students into program	0.5	Some
Wanted to change from a single teacher to a multiple teacher department	0.48	None
Had too many disciplinary problems	0.48	None
Lack of other equipment	0.43	None
Administration expected participation in too many extracurricular activities	0.41	None
There was a great deal of griping, arguing, taking sides and feuding among teachers	0.34	None
Counselor was advising students to not take agriculture classes	0.32	None
Spouse could not find employment	0.30	None
Wanted to teach in a smaller school	0.30	None
Wanted to go to a program that did less livestock showing	0.30	None
Pressure from community to expand activities	0.27	None
Wanted to change from a multiple teacher to a single teacher department	0.23	None
Did not get respect from students	0.23	None
Had too many students	0.16	None
Had a poor rapport with fellow teachers	0.14	None
Did not get along with another teacher in the agriculture department	0.02	None

1.50 and 2.49 indicating it had a "moderate" amount of influence. Factors with "some" amount of influence dominated the findings as indicated by the fact that 27 factors were found to have mean scores between 1.49 and .50. Fifteen factors had mean scores below .49 indicating they were in the "none" influence category.

Table XVI reports the mean responses for the factors broken down into groups as on the questionnaire. "Job Location" was the area with the highest overall mean (1.22), followed by "Facilities and Equipment" (0.91), "Personal Preference" (0.85), "School Administration" (0.83), "The Community" (0.62), "Students" (0.61), and "School Faculty" (0.41).

TABLE XVI

COMPARISON OF OVERALL MEAN INFLUENCE OF GROUPS OF FACTORS ON DECISION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS TO CHANGE SCHOOLS

Groups of Factors	Overall Mean	Influence
Job Location (4 factors)	1.22	Some
Facilities and Equipment (5 factors)	0.91	Some
Personal Preference (10 factors)	0.85	Some
School Administration (5 factors)	0.83	Some
The Community (5 factors)	0.62	Some
Students (9 factors)	0.61	Some
School Faculty (6 factors)	0.41	None

As illustrated by this table, the group of factors associated with school faculty were found to have no influence on teachers' decisions to change schools. The other six

groups of factors were found to be of only "Some" degree of influence on such decisions. However, in spite of falling into the same response category, there were differences in the levels of mean responses among these groups of factors. The Job Location factors received a 1.22 mean response with Facilities and Equipment being the next highest rated, with a .91. Personal Preference and School Administration factors were judged to be of essentially the same degree of influence with respective means of .85 and .83. Student factors received a mean response of .61, which was near the lower limit set for this response category.

Other Reasons for Changing Schools

Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate other possible reasons why they might change schools. They were asked to respond to the question "If you were to leave your present school, what would be the reasons associated with your leaving?" Ten or 22.7% stated that salary would be a factor. Nine or 20.5% also indicated that administration would have an influence.

Conclusions

Examination and interpretation of the major findings provided the opportunity for the author to draw the following conclusions

Conclusion #1

Agricultural education teachers that change schools tend to do so within the first five years of their teaching career, before they reach their 30th birthday and they generally only change schools once.

Conclusion #2

Contract related concerns do not have an influence on agricultural education teachers changing schools.

Conclusion #3

Where the job is located has the greatest amount of influence on the agricultural education teachers' decision to change schools.

Conclusion #4

While they provide insight into job mobility, none of the other factors included in this study can be judged to be major determinants of why agricultural education teachers decide to move to another school.

Conclusion #5

It appears that what influences the decision to relocate to another school varies considerably among individual teachers and may include individual or groups of factors different from those included in this study.

Recommendations

Based upon the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made by the researcher.

1. All of those involved in the placement of agricultural education teachers should be made aware that the greatest amount of changing school locations occurs among beginning and young teachers, early in their careers and that

other than location. There are no clearly identified factors upon which these decisions are based.

2. Administrators should be made aware that the proximity of their school to the hometowns of the prospective employees and/or the spouse's hometowns will likely play a role in the tenure of employment of new teachers in their schools.
3. A study should be conducted among agricultural education teachers to determine the distance their current employment location is from their hometown or their spouse's hometown and if they would consider relocating to get closer. Other factors concerning job location should also be considered to determine if there are other influences on a teacher's decision to relocate or remain at a particular location. These findings may give insight to the locations that teachers are willing to reside and make a career.
4. Another study utilizing techniques such as Delphi, focus groups or in-depth interviews should be conducted to identify the factors that have the greatest amount of influence upon moves from one school to another. Care should also be taken to ensure that questions are not contradictory to each other for the purpose of tabulating mean scores for the groups of factors.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Blezek, A.G. (1978, June). Be a Doer – Not a Quitter. Agricultural Education Magazine, 50(12), 286.

2. Brown, J. D. Jr. (1973) Factors which affect retention of Vocational Agriculture instructors in the southwestern United States (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Florida, 1973). Dissertation Abstracts International, 34, 6530.

3. Cano, J. (1990, June). Teacher stress – Teacher burnout: A profession at risk. Agricultural Education Magazine, 62(12), 13-14,22.

4. Chapman, D.W. (1984). Teacher retention: The test of a model. American Educational Research Journal, 21(3), 645-656.

5. Clapp, J.D. (1981). A Study of teacher changes among vocational agriculture teachers within the state of Oklahoma from July 1, 1975 to June 30, 1979. Unpublished masters thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

6. Craig, D.G. (1983, March). A national study of the supply and demand for teachers of vocational agriculture in 1982. Staff Study, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

7. Craig, D.G. (1988, January). "Twenty-two year trends in supply and demand of vocational agriculture teachers." Agriculture Education Magazine, 60(7), 11,12.

8. Fenton, W.L. (1970). A Study to determine why Oklahoma Vocational Agriculture instructors changed their profession during 1968-1970 school years and their new occupations. Unpublished master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

9. Flowers, J., & Pepple, J.D. (1987). Assessment of the morale of beginning vocational agriculture teachers in Illinois. The Journal of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture, 29(2), 2-6,13.

10. Freudenberger, J.J., & Richelson, G. (1980). Burnout: The high cost of high achievement. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

11. Gorczyca, J. (1987). Job satisfaction of vocational agriculture teachers in central Oklahoma. Unpublished master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

12. Grady, T.L. (1985). The relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance of vocational agriculture teachers in Louisiana. (Doctoral dissertation, Louisiana State University, (1984). Dissertation Abstracts International, 46, 875A.

13. Grady, T.L. (1985). Job satisfaction of vocational agriculture teachers in Louisiana. The Journal of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture, 26(3), 70-78.

14. Gruneberg, M.M. (1976). Job satisfaction – a reader. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

15. Haberland, C.A. (1991). Job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers in southeast Oklahoma. Unpublished master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

16. Harrison, W.R. (1970). An identification of factors influencing teachers of vocational agriculture to terminate or continue high school teaching. Unpublished master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

17. Heathcott, E.E. (1974). Occupational choice tenure and selected aspects of the employment patterns of Murray State University graduates qualifying to teach vocational agriculture. A paper presented to the southern region research conference in agricultural education, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

18. Knight, J.A., & Bender, R.E. (1978). Why vocational agriculture teachers in Ohio leave teaching. Columbus: Ohio State University National Center for Research in Vocational and Technical Education. (ERIC Document ED 164-883).

19. Knight, J.A. (1978, fall). Why vocational agriculture teachers in Ohio leave teaching. The Journal of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture, 19(3), 11-17.

20. Knight, J.A., & Dickens, J.W. (1978, December). Why vocational Agriculture teachers enter, remain in, or leave teaching. A paper presented to Agricultural Educators division at American Vocational Association Convention, Dallas, TX.

21. Kotrlik, J.W., & Malek, A.P. (1986). Job satisfaction of vocational agriculture teachers in the southeastern United States. The Journal of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture, 27(1), 33-38.

22. Lamberth, E.E. (March, 1963). Why teachers of vocational agriculture leave the profession. Agricultural Education Magazine, 35(8), 194.

23. Layton, M.J. (1988). A follow-up study of agriculture education graduates at Oklahoma State University: 1980-1987. Unpublished master's thesis, Oklahoma State University,

24. Litt, M.D., & Turk, D.C. (1985). Sources of stress and dissatisfaction in experienced high school teachers. The Journal of Education Research, 78(3), 178-185.

25. Maggarrell, J. (February, 1978). Why scholars move on. Chronicles of Higher Education pp.1, 9.

26. Miller, L.E. (1975). Relationship between first-year teachers morale and behavior. A paper presented to the southern region research conference in Agricultural Education, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

27. Phellps, G.F. (1969). Factors which influence Iowa vocational agriculture instructors to remain in the profession. Unpublished master's thesis, Iowa State University, Ames, IA.

28. Reece, D.H. (1976). Factors influencing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the vocational agriculture teaching profession between the years 1970-1976. Unpublished master's thesis, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

29. Reilly, P.W. (1979). Where will you teach? Agriculture Education Magazine, 52 (3), 58,59.

30. Reilly, P., & Welton, R.F. (1980). Factors encouraging Kansas vocational agriculture teachers to remain in teaching. The Journal of the American Association of Teacher Educators in Agriculture, 21(3), 47-51, 67.

31. Thomson, O.E., Gwynn, D., Palmer, V.L. III, & Eaker, R.F. (1986). Profile of vocational agriculture teachers: Trends in number, sex, preparation and satisfaction of credential recipients. University of California, Davis. Department of Applied Behavioral Science. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 273-789).

32. Vossler, L. (February, 1960). Why former teachers of vocational agriculture left the profession. Agricultural Education Magazine, pp. 180-181.

33. White, J.D. (1979). Identification and comparison of factors influencing Oklahoma vocational agriculture instructors to remain in the profession. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK.

34. Zubrick, P.R. (1980, January). Is there really a teacher shortage? Agricultural Education Magazine, 52(7), 20,21.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

How many years have you taught high school agriculture? _____
How many years have you taught high school agriculture in Oklahoma? _____

How many times have you changed schools? _____
What was the average length of stay at each school? _____

Age: _____ Marital status: _____married _____single

What is the total number of students enrolled in your current Agriculture program? ____
What is the total number of students enrolled in your previous Agriculture program?____

What is the high school enrollment of your current school? _____
What was the high school enrollment of your previous school? _____

Contract Related Factors

Were any of the following factors the reason that you changed schools?

Agriculture department was discontinued. Yes _____ No _____

Agriculture department had a reduction of a teacher. Yes _____ No _____

School was consolidated. Yes _____ No _____

Contract was not renewed. Yes _____ No _____

If you answered yes to any of the four questions above, disregard the remainder of this questionnaire.

Please indicate the amount of influence the following factors had on your decision to change schools? Very Great, Great, Moderate, Some, or None.

	VERY GREAT	GREAT	MODERATE	SOME	NONE
Location					
To get closer to your hometown.					
To get closer to your spouse's hometown.					
To get closer to your spouse's job location.					
Spouse could not find employment.					
Personal					
To have the opportunity to work more with a different area in agriculture (different species of livestock, horticulture, mecag, etc.)					
Wanted to teach in a larger school.					
Wanted to teach in a smaller school.					
Wanted to change from a single teacher to a multiple teacher department.					
Wanted to change from a multiple teacher to a single teacher department.					
Wanted to build up a program considered to be down or new.					
Wanted to go to a program that did less livestock showing.					
Wanted to go to a program that did more livestock showing.					
Salary was too low – (went to a better paying school)					

	VERY GREAT	GREAT	MODERATE	SOME	NONE
Did not feel secure in position (uncertainty of employment)					
Community					
Community placed too much emphasis on winning.					
Pressure from community to expand activities.					
Community attitude toward agriculture program was not desirable.					
Lack of appreciation from community.					
Was difficult for teachers to gain acceptance by the people in the community.					
Administration					
Lack of interest, appreciation and support Expressed by the administration for the Agriculture program.					
Had a personality conflict with an administrator.					
Administration didn't allow participation in all the activities you thought necessary.					
Disciplinary students were being placed in class without consultation (agriculture program was a dumping ground.					
Administration expected participation in too many extracurricular activities.					

	VERY GREAT	GREAT	MODERATE	SOME	NONE
Faculty					
There was a great deal of griping, arguing, taking sides and feuding among teachers.					
Faculty had a tendency to form cliques.					
There was a sense of jealousy toward the agriculture teacher by other teachers.					
Had a poor rapport with fellow teachers.					
Did not get along with another teacher in the agriculture department. (if applicable)					
Counselor was advising students to not take Agriculture classes.					
Facilities and Equipment					
Lack of adequate transportation.					
Lack of adequate shop and equipment.					
Lack of adequate livestock equipment.					
Lack of adequate classroom environment and equipment.					
Lack of other equipment (please specify). _____					
Students					
Had too many students.					
Wanted more students.					

	VERY GREAT	GREAT	MODERATE	SOME	NONE
Lack of participation by students (contests, SAE's,etc.)					
Had run out of talented students.					
Was failing to get good students into program.					
Students did not appreciate your effort put forth on their behalf.					
Did not get respect from students.					
Had too many disciplinary problems.					
School discipline was to relaxed.					

If you were to leave your present school, what would be the reasons associated with your leaving?

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER

Dear _____:

Secondary schools in Oklahoma seem to have a rather high rate of turnover of agricultural education teachers. Information obtained from the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education indicated an average of 49.4 agricultural education teacher turnovers per year in Oklahoma during a five-year period between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 2001. Within the average of 49.4 agricultural education teacher turnovers per year, an average of 16.4 were changes from one school to another school.

The large number of agricultural education teacher job changes could prove to be very costly to many school districts throughout Oklahoma when consideration is given to the time and money spent recruiting, hiring, and training a new teacher. In addition, the students, community, and administration must make an adjustment to a new teacher. To complete the requirements to receive my masters degree, I am conducting a study to determine the reasons associated with agricultural education teachers in Oklahoma moving from one school to another school.

Records indicate that in _____, you relocated from the _____ to the _____ school district. If you would be so kind to take 10 minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed stamped envelope, it would be very beneficial in completing this study. All of the information gathered will remain confidential and no participants in this questionnaire will be identified. However, each questionnaire has been coded to enable the investigator to identify the nonrespondents in order to send a follow-up letter. The coding procedure is for follow-up responses only, and afterwards, all code sheets will be destroyed. Participation in the survey indicates your informed consent. After the data has been compiled, all of the questionnaires will be destroyed.

Your contribution is important and thanks for your participation.

Sincerely,

Harold Stephens
OSU Graduate Student
Atoka County Extension Educator

Robert H. Terry, Emeritus Prof.
Dept. Agricultural Education,
Communications and 4-H Youth
Development

APPENDIX C

INSTITIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 9/26/02

Date: Thursday, September 27, 2001 IRB Application No AG026

Proposal Title: FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH EMPLOYMENT CHANGES FROM SCHOOL TO SCHOOL AMONG AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN OKLAHOMA FROM JULY 1, 1996 TO JUNE 30, 2001

Principal Investigator(s):

Harold Stephens
PO Box 1080
Atoka, OK 74525

Robert Terry
458 AG Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

HAROLD L. STEPHENS

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: INFLUENCE OF SELECTED FACTORS UPON SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT CHANGES AMONG AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Ada, Oklahoma, On February 3, 1964, the son of Thurman and Bette Stephens.

Education: Graduated from Roff High School, Roff, Oklahoma in May 1982; received a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May 1986; received certification to teach Vocational Agriculture from Oklahoma State Department of Education in December of 1991; Completed the requirements for the Master of Science Degree with a major in Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University in December 2001.

Experience: Raised on a family ranching operation near Roff, Oklahoma; employed by Oklahoma State University, Department of Animal Science as an undergraduate; employed by Greer Ranches at Union City, Oklahoma as a ranch manager, June 1986 to November 1988; employed by Hardy Ranch, Roff, Oklahoma as ranch manager, November 1988 to January 1990; employed by Atoka Public Schools, Atoka, Oklahoma as Agricultural Education instructor from July 1993 to April 2000; employed by Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service as Extension Educator, Agriculture/4-H and Youth Development, Rural Development and County Extension Director – Atoka County from April 2000 to present.